

NSC BRIEFING

25 July 1960

REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

- I. Situation within the Congo has apparently eased somewhat in past few days.
 - A. Half of eventual 12,000-man United Nations Force now on scene, are restoring order almost without incident.
 - B. Belgian Forces, responding to last week's Security Council resolution, pulled back on Saturday to two Congo bases (except in Katanga Province where nearly 2,000 Belgian troops helping keep order).
 - C. Work progressing toward restoring port facilities at Matadi, dredging Congo river, and restoring vital fuel pipelines.
 - D. Katanga Premier Moise Tshombe, having failed in secessionist move to obtain recognition as independent state, now proposes loose federation of autonomous states composed of Katanga and five other Congo provinces.
- II. Serious problems remain and require prompt action, however.
 - A. Foremost among these is status of Belgian bases. Agreement of 29 June 1960 (which not yet ratified) granted Belgium two bases at Kamina and Kitona.
 1. But Lumumba stated to the press in London on Saturday that: "It is inconceivable that foreign bases should exist in a sovereign state."

- B. Katanga Province where Premier Tshombe--apparently egged on by some Belgian groups--opposes strongly unitary state is most important to new Congo state.
1. Landlocked Katanga is richest of Congo's six provinces and adjoins Copperbelt of Northern Rhodesia to the south.
 2. Katanga supplies two-thirds of total value of Congo's mineral production--all Congo's copper (7% of world production), cobalt (60% world production), manganese, zinc, cadmium, germanium and uranium. Agricultural resources, however, are poor.
 3. Katanga's wealth essential to creation of viable Congo state.
 4. Congo's leaders have unanimous support of increasingly vocal African bloc in opposing dismemberment of Congo.
- C. Faced with loss of Belgian technicians, Congo in dire need of administrative and economic cadres.
1. UN representative Bunche has approached Morocco and Tunisia--seriously shorthanded in capable administrators themselves--and possibly other African governments for administrators.
 2. Congo leaders may resist assignment of "white technicians"; probably will be influenced by other African leaders such as Ghana's President Nkrumah who, although he retains British advisors and technicians, recently declared "our campaign is to drive out the white people from Africa."

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E. Unemployment and food shortages create immediate problems, may produce some serious localized situations until employment is obtained and distribution problems can be solved.

III. Mercurial Premier Patrice Lumumba is major negative factor in present Congo situation.

A. Described both as "crazy" [redacted] and paranoid. 25X6
Congo's advance mission to the UN informed African group of Lumumba's "particularly violent character."

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C. Despite Lumumba's withdrawal of his threat to request Soviet intervention and his remarks concerning his desire for Western assistance, Congo's position appears to be moving toward Soviet-oriented neutralism.

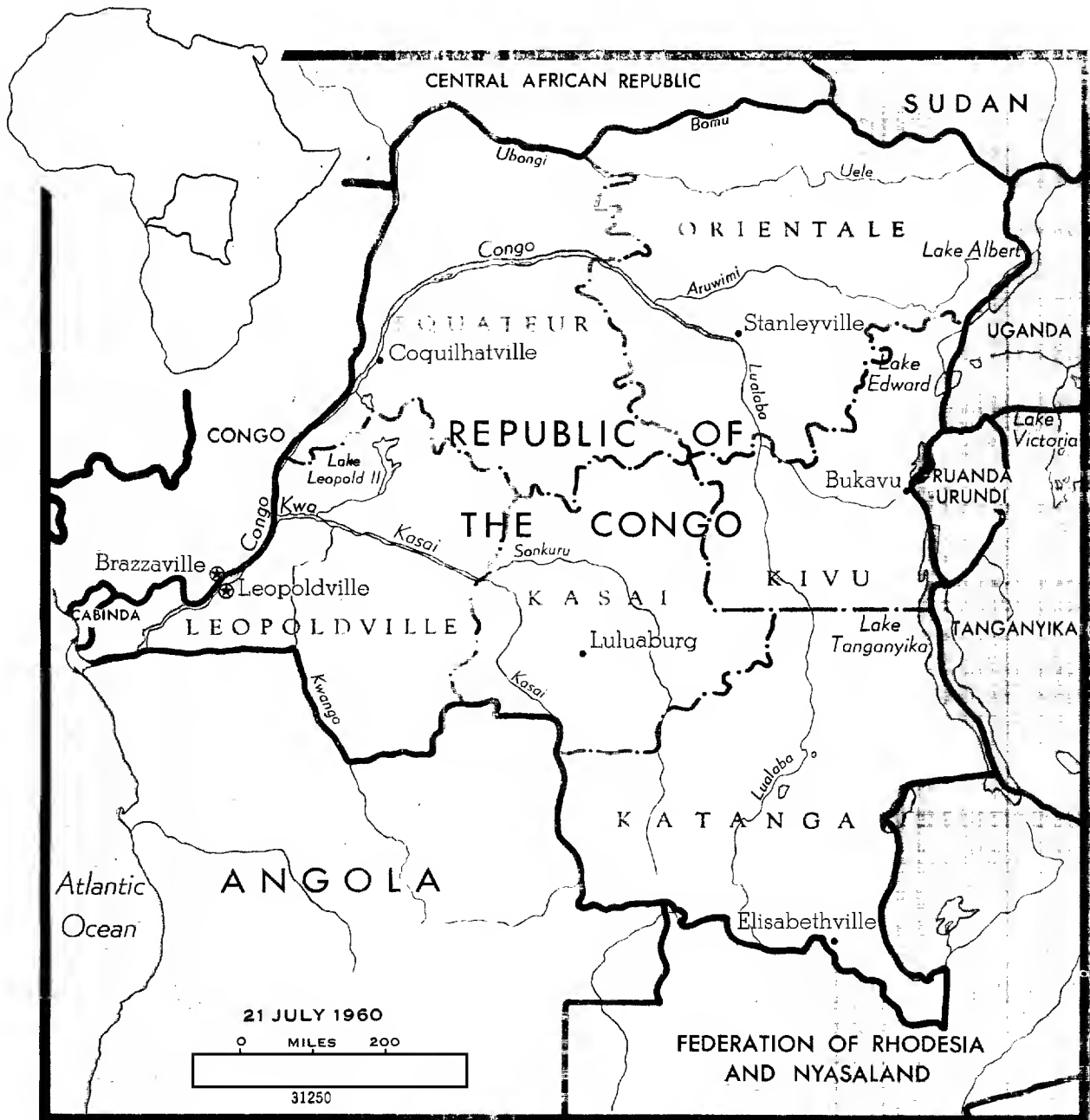
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IV. The USSR may have become concerned over Lumumba's appeals for Soviet military support.

A. After proposing a three day ultimatum from the UN to Brussels, the Soviet delegation supported the moderate Tunisian-Ceylonese resolution in the UN Security Council, probably to avoid becoming isolated from the Afro-Asian position.

B. The hasty dispatch of a small party of Soviet officials to Leopoldville on 21 July suggests that the USSR is anxious to be in a position to coordinate further moves as well as to put some limitation on further Congolese initiatives which would directly involve the USSR.

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